

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI
EASTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)
)
Plaintiff,)
)
v.) No. 4:25 CR SEP (4:25 wi 10 SEP)
)
BRIANNA SIMMONS,)
)
Defendant.)

GUILTY PLEA AGREEMENT

Come now the parties and hereby agree, as follows:

1. PARTIES:

The parties are the defendant, Brianna Simmons, represented by defense counsel, Terence Niehoff, and the United States of America (hereinafter "United States" or "Government"), represented by the Office of the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Missouri. This agreement does not, and is not intended to, bind any governmental office or agency other than the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Missouri. The Court is neither a party to nor bound by this agreement.

2. GUILTY PLEA:

Pursuant to Rule 11(c)(1)(A), Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, in exchange for the defendant's voluntary plea of guilty to Counts One, Two, Three, and Four of the Information, the United States agrees that no further federal prosecution will be brought in this District relative to the defendant's production and transfer of false identification documents between January 1, 2021, and March 31, 2024, of which the Government is aware at this time.

In addition, the parties agree that the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines Total Offense Level analysis agreed to by the parties herein is the result of negotiation and led, in part, to the guilty plea. The parties further agree that either party may request a sentence above or below the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines range (combination of Total Offense Level and Criminal History Category) ultimately determined by the Court pursuant to any chapter of the Guidelines and Title 18, United States Code, Section 3553(a). The parties further agree that notice of any such request will be given no later than ten days prior to sentencing and that said notice shall specify the legal and factual bases for the request.

3. ELEMENTS:

As to Counts One and Two, the defendant admits to knowingly violating Title 18, United States Code, Section 1028(a)(1), and admits there is a factual basis for the plea and further fully understands that the elements of the crime are:

- a. The defendant knowingly produced an identification document, authentication feature, or false identification document,
- b. When the defendant transferred an identification document, authentication feature, or false identification document, the defendant did so without lawful authority, and
- c. The identification document, authentication feature, or false identification document was or appears to have been issued by or under the authority of the United States, or the production of the identification document, authentication feature, or false identification document was in or affected interstate or foreign commerce, or the identification document or false identification document was transported in the mail in the course of the transfer prohibited section.

As to Counts Three and Four, the defendant admits to knowingly violating Title 18, United States Code, Section 1028(a)(2), and admits there is a factual basis for the plea and further fully understands that the elements of the crime are:

- a. The defendant knowingly transferred an identification document, authentication feature, or false identification document,
- b. When the defendant transferred an identification document, authentication feature, or false identification document, the defendant did so knowing the document or feature was stolen or produced without lawful authority, and
- c. The identification document, authentication feature, or false identification document was or appears to have been issued by or under the authority of the United States, of the transfer of the identification document, authentication feature, or false identification document was in or affected interstate or foreign commerce, or the identification document or false identification document was transported in the mail in the course of the transfer prohibited section.

4. FACTS:

The parties agree that the facts in this case are as follows and that the government would prove these facts beyond a reasonable doubt if the case were to go to trial. These facts may be considered as relevant conduct pursuant to Section 1B1.3:

Beginning sometime in 2021 and continuing to the present, the defendant has been the owner and operator of a business known by a variety of names including New Era Credit Repair and Business Services (“New Era”). The defendant held the business out as providing credit repair services to clients using a variety of methods, some of which were legitimate and others that were fraudulent.

The defendant maintained a public Facebook page for New Era on which she advertised the business and communicated with clients. The page advertised the sale of various packages that included the sale of false and fraudulent documents such as Social Security Cards (“SSC”), paycheck stubs, and bank statements. Clients would use the fraudulent documents to create credit profiles that would allow them to obtain housing, open lines of credit, and purchase vehicles when they would otherwise be unqualified to do so due to their true credit history.

On or about April 13, 2023, the defendant knowingly produced or caused to be produced for L.M., and then transferred or caused to be transferred to L.M., a fraudulent SSC that L.M. attempted to use to obtain housing. L.M. paid the defendant approximately \$1600 in exchange for two credit repair packages that included the fraudulent SSC.

On or about February 5, 2024, the defendant knowingly produced or caused to be produced for T.W., and then transferred or caused to be transferred to T.W., a fraudulent SSC that T.W. used to obtain a loan for the purchase of a vehicle. T.W. later returned the vehicle to the auto dealership after law enforcement advised her that the transaction was fraudulent. T.W. paid the defendant approximately \$1950 in exchange for the credit repair package that included the fraudulent SSC.

The Government would prove that the defendant's conduct occurred within the Eastern District of Missouri. The Government also would prove that the fraudulent Social Security Cards appeared to have been issued by and under the authority of the United States. The defendant admits that she knowingly produced, or caused to be produced, and transferred, or caused to be transferred, fraudulent Social Security Cards, the production and transfer of which was in and affected interstate commerce, and that the documents were produced without lawful authority.

5. STATUTORY PENALTIES:

The defendant fully understands that the maximum possible penalty provided by law for the crime to which the defendant is pleading guilty is imprisonment of not more than 15 years, a fine of not more than \$250,000.00, or both such imprisonment and fine. The Court may also impose a period of supervised release of not more than 3 years.

6. U.S. SENTENCING GUIDELINES (2023 MANUAL):

The defendant understands that this offense is affected by the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and the actual sentencing range is determined by both the Total Offense Level and the Criminal

History Category. The parties agree that the following U.S. Sentencing Guidelines Total Offense Level provisions apply.

a. Chapter 2 Offense Conduct:

(1) **Base Offense Level:** The parties agree that the base offense level is 6, as found in Section 2B1.1(a)(2).

(2) **Specific Offense Characteristics:** The parties agree that the following Specific Offense Characteristics apply: 2 levels should be added pursuant to Section 2B1.1(11)(B)(ii) because the offense involved the production or trafficking of any authentication feature.

Because the resulting offense level is less than level 12, increase to level 12.

b. Chapter 3 and 4 Adjustments:

(1) **Acceptance of Responsibility:** The parties recommend that two levels should be deducted pursuant to U.S.S.G. § 3E1.1(a) because Defendant has clearly demonstrated acceptance of responsibility.

The parties agree that the defendant's eligibility for this deduction is based upon information presently known. If after the taking of the guilty plea the government receives new evidence of statements or conduct by the defendant which it believes are inconsistent with defendant's eligibility for this deduction, the government may present said evidence to the court and argue that the defendant should not receive all or part of the deduction pursuant to Section 3E1.1, without violating the plea agreement.

(2) **Adjustment for Certain Zero-Point Offenders:** If the Court determines that the defendant does not receive any criminal history points from Chapter 4, Part A, then the parties

agree that two levels should be deducted under Section 4C1.1(a), because the defendant meets all of the criteria under Section 4C1.1(a)(2) through (a)(10).

(3) **Other Adjustments:** The parties agree that the following additional adjustments apply: None.

c. **Estimated Total Offense Level:** The parties estimate that the Total Offense Level is 10 unless a two-level reduction under Section 4C1.1(a) applies based on the Court's determination of the defendant's criminal history.

d. **Criminal History:** The determination of the defendant's Criminal History Category shall be left to the Court. Either party may challenge, before and at sentencing, the finding of the Presentence Report as to the defendant's criminal history and the applicable category. The defendant's criminal history is known to the defendant and is substantially available in the Pretrial Services Report.

e. **Effect of Parties' U.S. Sentencing Guidelines Analysis:** The parties agree that the Court is not bound by the Guidelines analysis agreed to herein. The parties may not have foreseen all applicable Guidelines. The Court may, in its discretion, apply or not apply any Guideline despite the agreement herein and the parties shall not be permitted to withdraw from the plea agreement.

7. WAIVER OF APPEAL AND POST-CONVICTION RIGHTS:

a. **Appeal:** The defendant has been fully apprised by defense counsel of the defendant's rights concerning appeal and fully understands the right to appeal the sentence under Title 18, United States Code, Section 3742.

(1) **Non-Sentencing Issues:** The parties waive all rights to appeal all non-jurisdictional, non-sentencing issues, including, but not limited to, any issues relating to pretrial motions, discovery and the guilty plea.

(2) **Sentencing Issues:** The parties agree to waive the right to appeal all sentencing issues except those related to: (1) application of Sentencing Guideline offense-level adjustments (including those based on criminal history) not specifically set forth in the plea agreement or non-application of adjustments specifically set forth in the agreement; (2) calculation of the defendant's criminal history category; or (3) substantive reasonableness of the sentence—above the Guideline range ultimately determined by the Court for appeals taken by the defendant, or below that range for appeals taken by the Government.

b. **Habeas Corpus:** The defendant agrees to waive all rights to contest the conviction or sentence in any post-conviction proceeding, including one pursuant to Title 28, United States Code, Section 2255, except for claims of prosecutorial misconduct or ineffective assistance of counsel.

c. **Right to Records:** The defendant waives all rights, whether asserted directly or by a representative, to request from any department or agency of the United States any records pertaining to the investigation or prosecution of this case, including any records that may be sought under the Freedom of Information Act, Title 5, United States Code, Section 522, or the Privacy Act, Title 5, United States Code, Section 552(a).

8. OTHER:

a. **Disclosures Required by the United States Probation Office:** The defendant agrees to truthfully complete and sign forms as required by the United States Probation Office prior to

sentencing and consents to the release of these forms and any supporting documentation by the United States Probation Office to the government.

b. Civil or Administrative Actions not Barred; Effect on Other Governmental Agencies:

Agencies: Nothing contained herein limits the rights and authority of the United States to take any civil, tax, immigration/deportation or administrative action against the defendant.

c. Supervised Release: Pursuant to any supervised release term, the Court will impose standard conditions upon the defendant and may impose special conditions related to the crime defendant committed. These conditions will be restrictions on the defendant to which the defendant will be required to adhere. Violation of the conditions of supervised release resulting in revocation may require the defendant to serve a term of imprisonment equal to the length of the term of supervised release, but not greater than the term set forth in Title 18, United States Code, Section 3583(e)(3), without credit for the time served after release. The defendant understands that parole has been abolished

d. Mandatory Special Assessment: Pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 3013, the Court is required to impose a mandatory special assessment of \$100 per count for a total of \$400, which the defendant agrees to pay at the time of sentencing. Money paid by the defendant toward any restitution or fine imposed by the Court shall be first used to pay any unpaid mandatory special assessment.

e. Possibility of Detention: The defendant may be subject to immediate detention pursuant to the provisions of Title 18, United States Code, Section 3143.

f. Fines, Restitution and Costs of Incarceration and Supervision: The Court may impose a fine, restitution (in addition to any penalty authorized by law), costs of incarceration and costs of supervision. The defendant agrees that any fine or restitution imposed by the Court will

be due and payable immediately. Pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 3663A, an order of restitution is mandatory for all crimes listed in Section 3663A(c). Regardless of the Count of conviction, the amount of mandatory restitution imposed shall include all amounts allowed by Section 3663A(b) and the amount of loss agreed to by the parties, including all relevant conduct loss. The defendant agrees to provide full restitution to all victims of all charges in the indictment.

g. Forfeiture: The defendant knowingly and voluntarily waives any right, title, and interest in all items seized by law enforcement officials during the course of their investigation, whether or not they are subject to forfeiture, and agrees not to contest the vesting of title of such items in the United States. The defendant agrees to abandon [his/her] interest in all seized items and further agrees that said items may be disposed of or destroyed by law enforcement officials in any manner without further notice. By abandoning these items, the defendant waives any future rights to receive additional notice, a valuation of the items, or the opportunity to submit a claim to contest the disposition or destruction of the items that may exist under any policies or procedures of the seizing agency(ies).

9. ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND WAIVER OF THE DEFENDANT'S RIGHTS:

In pleading guilty, the defendant acknowledges, fully understands and hereby waives his rights, including but not limited to: the right to plead not guilty to the charges; the right to be tried by a jury in a public and speedy trial; the right to file pretrial motions, including motions to suppress or exclude evidence; the right at such trial to a presumption of innocence; the right to require the government to prove the elements of the offenses against the defendant beyond a reasonable doubt; the right not to testify; the right not to present any evidence; the right to be protected from compelled self-incrimination; the right at trial to confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses; the right to testify and present evidence and the right to compel the attendance

of witnesses. The defendant further understands that by this guilty plea, the defendant expressly waives all the rights set forth in this paragraph.

The defendant fully understands that the defendant has the right to be represented by counsel, and if necessary, to have the Court appoint counsel at trial and at every other stage of the proceeding. The defendant's counsel has explained these rights and the consequences of the waiver of these rights. The defendant fully understands that, as a result of the guilty plea, no trial will, in fact, occur and that the only action remaining to be taken in this case is the imposition of the sentence.

The defendant is fully satisfied with the representation received from defense counsel. The defendant has reviewed the government's evidence and discussed the government's case and all possible defenses and defense witnesses with defense counsel. Defense counsel has completely and satisfactorily explored all areas which the defendant has requested relative to the government's case and any defenses.

10. VOLUNTARY NATURE OF THE GUILTY PLEA AND PLEA AGREEMENT:

This document constitutes the entire agreement between the defendant and the government, and no other promises or inducements have been made, directly or indirectly, by any agent of the government, including any Department of Justice attorney, concerning any plea to be entered in this case. In addition, the defendant states that no person has, directly or indirectly, threatened or coerced the defendant to do or refrain from doing anything in connection with any aspect of this case, including entering a plea of guilty.

The defendant acknowledges having voluntarily entered into both the plea agreement and the guilty plea. The defendant further acknowledges that this guilty plea is made of the defendant's own free will and that the defendant is, in fact, guilty.

11. CONSEQUENCES OF POST-PLEA MISCONDUCT:

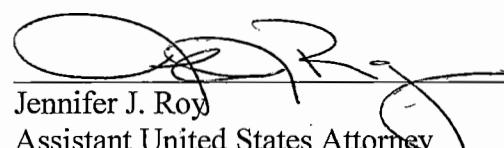
After pleading guilty and before sentencing, if defendant commits any crime, other than minor traffic offenses, violates any condition of release that results in revocation, violates any term of this guilty plea agreement, intentionally provides misleading, incomplete or untruthful information to the U.S. Probation Office or fails to appear for sentencing, the United States, at its option, may be released from its obligations under this agreement. The Government may also, in its discretion, proceed with this agreement and may advocate for any sentencing position supported by the facts, including but not limited to obstruction of justice and denial of acceptance of responsibility.

12. NO RIGHT TO WITHDRAW GUILTY PLEA:

Pursuant to Rule 11(c) and (d), Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, the defendant understands that there will be no right to withdraw the plea entered under this agreement, except where the Court rejects those portions of the plea agreement which deal with charges the government agrees to dismiss or not to bring.

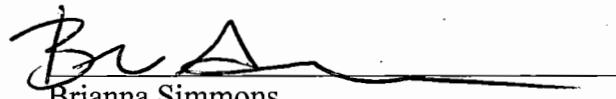
6/30/2025

Date


Jennifer J. Roy
Assistant United States Attorney

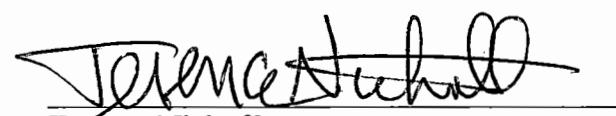
6/30/25

Date


Brianna Simmons
Defendant

6/30/25

Date


Terence Niehoff
Attorney for Defendant